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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at the
ORDINATION

Of the REVEREND
Mr. *WILLIAM PORTER*,

JULY 7, 1756.

At *Miles's Lane, London*,
By JOHN CONDER.

Together with an
INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE,
By TIMOTHY JOLLIE.

Mr. PORTER's Confession of FAITH.

And an EXHORTATION to Him,
By THOMAS HALL.

*Published at the united Request of the Church,
and of the Ministers then present.*

L O N D O N:

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and A. MASON, near *Fore-street*. MDCCCLVI.

[Price One Shilling.]

SEYMOUR

ORDINATION

MR. WILLIAM PORTER

July 7, 1858

At the Court of Common Pleas

By JOHN CONDER



INTRODUCED BY

BY TIMOTHY

MR. PORTER, Clerk of the Court

And all other matters relating to the

BY THOMAS HALL

Witness my hand and the seal of the Court
this 7th day of July 1858

L O N B O N

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in the City of New York.



INTRODUCTION.

 O D, who at sundry times,
and in divers manners, spake in
times past unto the Fathers by
the Prophets,—bath in these
last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he
bath appointed Heir of all things, by whom
also he made the worlds; who being the bright-
ness of the Father's glory, and the express
image of his Person, upholding all things by
the word of his power, when he had by him-
self purged our sins, sat down on the right
band of the majesty on high;—far above all
principality and power, and might and domi-
nion, and every name that is named, not only
in this world, but also in that which is to
come: And bath put all things under his
feet, and gave him to be head over all things
to the church, which is his body, the fullness
of him, who filleth all in all.

How

INTRODUCTION.

How trifling, how insignificant must all the pretensions of *Rome* be in assuming that jurisdiction they are no ways qualified to fulfil? If Christ the invisible Head fills all in all, what occasion can there be for any other *?

The Apostle *Paul* gives us a very distinct account of this affair, in the Officers of Christ's Church, mentioned Ephes. iv. 11. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry,*

* The Authority assumed by the Bishops of *Rome* is not only without foundation in the word of God, but it is unsuitable to the capacity of man. Had a visible head been necessary to the wise regulation of the christian church, we have no reason to doubt our kind Redeemer would have in an explicate manner pointed out the person or persons, and not left his body without such an agent of direction and government for several centuries, and that in its infant state. The remarkable contest betwixt the bishop of *Constantinople* and the bishop of *Rome*, in the beginning of the seventh century, makes it evident that the bishop of *Rome* then usurped no such claim; so far from it, that he condemns the assuming the title of Christ's vicar, or pretending to any superiority, or being stiled universal bishop. He exclaims against it as a name of blasphemy, and compares it to the attempt of *Lucifer* to set himself above his fellow-angels; nay he proceeds to assert, that the assuming that swelling title, was a certain sign that antichrist the son of pride was at hand; so far was the bishop of *Rome* then from claiming any superiority, that he condemns it as a vile proceeding in any other. *Dupin's Ecclesiastical History, of the beginning of the seventh century, p. 64.*

ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. In this apostolic account, you will readily observe a difference. Some had an extraordinary commission and were adorned with extraordinary gifts, such as working of miracles, speaking in different languages the wonderful works of God: Qualifications well suited to the first ages of the church, when the Kingdom of the Messiah was to be erected in opposition to the inveterate prejudice of the *Jews*, and the insolent violence of the *Gentiles*.

Thus the great head of the church furnishes it, with Apostles, and Prophets, and Evangelists, well adapted to spread the everlasting Gospel through the nations. Our blessed Lord still manifests his care by giving his Churches ordinary, or common Pastors and Teachers, who in succession might carry on the designs of his grace, that the number of his chosen people might be brought into his fold, and they might be fed with knowledge and understanding, with sound doctrine and the bread of life, whereby they might be nourished to life eternal.

As

As one great part of the Pastoral Office consists in faithfully instructing those who are committed to their care, in the pure and uncorrupted doctrines of God's word; I would now desire, that you, Sir, who are called to that office in this church, would in the presence of God and before this Assembly give a plain and summary account of your faith in the several articles of scripture doctrine, that with more satisfaction other churches may maintain communion with this.

Here Mr. Porter delivered a Confession of his Faith, which is herewith published.

One of the Church was desired to give some account of the Steps taken in the call given our Brother to the pastoral office.

Which was done by one of the Deacons.

It

INTRODUCTION.

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It was also desired, our dear Brother would acquaint us with the attention and regard he hath paid to what seemed to him the plain call of God.

To this Mr. Porter gave a distinct Answer.

With great satisfaction have we observed the regular steps, which the Church hath taken in the call given to our Brother to the pastoral office.

I must desire the Church to recognize their call by the Brethren holding up their hands.

Which was accordingly done.

And Mr. *William Porter*, I must desire you would testify your acceptance of the Call you have received

Which was accordingly done.

You

You have here witnessed a good confession before many witnesses : And now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant ; make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*



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A

CONFESSION of FAITH

Delivered at his

ORDINATION,

By WILLIAM PORTER.



CONFESSION OF FAITH

Delivered at the

ORDINATION

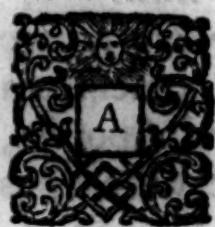
By WILLIAM PORTER.

NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY J. B. ALLEN, 1824.



A

CONFESSION of FAITH.



S it has pleased the LORD in his allwise Providence, to call me, the least of all Saints and the unworthiest of his Servants, *to preach the unsearchable Riches of Christ*; I desire to lay out my Talents, Strength, and Time for his Glory, and the Good of precious and immortal Souls. And as by the Direction of the same unerring Hand, I am now called to minister in holy Things in this Church of CHRIST; I would therefore with all Humility and Reverence on this solemn Occasion, make an open Declaration of what I humbly apprehend to be *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, and which in a Dependence on that *Strength which is made perfect in Weakness*, I design to make the Subject Matter of my future Ministrations.

I. As *the Being* of a GOD is the Foundation of all Religion, I believe, that there is one only the living and true GOD, pos-
The Being of GOD.
fessed

A Confession of FAITH.

essed of all possible Perfection, a glorious, pure and incomprehensible Spirit, self-existent, eternal, immense, immutable, almighty, omniscient, independent, infinitely holy, just and good, *in whom, and through whom, and to whom are all Things*; who is GOD and there is none else, who is the LORD and there is none besides him.

Scriptures. II. I BELIEVE, that *the Scriptures* are the Word of GOD; that they come from him, and that his Prophets and Apostles, being inspired by him, did reveal them, as his Mind and Will to Men for their Salvation; that *they are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction and Instruction in Righteousness.*

Trinity. III. I BELIEVE, that in the Unity of the Godhead there are *three Persons*, GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghost; that the Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding, that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son, but that these three are one; (a) *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one*: the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory.

Decrees. IV. I BELIEVE, that GOD from all Eternity, according to the Counsel of his
own

(a) 1 John v. 7.

own Will, and for the Exaltation of his glorious Attributes, hath *fore-ordained* whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, that he is not the Author of Sin, nor is any Violence offered to the Will of the Creature; and though God certainly knows whatsoever does, or can come to pass on all supposed Conditions, yet we are not to conceive, that the Purposes of his Will depend upon his Foreknowledge in these Cases.

(b) Being predestinated according to the Purpose of him, who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will.

V. I BELIEVE, that God out of his great Creation. Goodness, for his Pleasure and Glory, did *create* the World, and all Things that are therein, visible and invisible; that he created them in six Days, and on the seventh rested from all his Works, which when he had finished, he pronounced to be all very good. *(c) All Things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

VI. FARTHER, I firmly believe the Provi- most wise, and holy Providence of the great dence. Creator; that this his Providence extends to all his Creatures, and all their Actions, for *he upholds all Things by the Word of his Power.* *(d) And he doth according to his Will, in the Army of Heaven, and among the*

(b) Ephes. i. 11. *(c)* John i. 3. *(d)* Dan. iv. 35.

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the Inhabitants of the Earth. (e) The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in the Behalf of them, whose Heart is perfect toward him.

Angels.

VII. As to the Works of his Hands, the principal Creatures of his glorious Power, were Angels and Men: As to *the Angels*, I believe some of them kept not their first State, but rose up in rebellion against God their Creator and Sovereign; wherefore he deprived them of the Honours and Happiness of the upper World, cast them from Heaven into the lowest Hell, and there *(f) He hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darknes, to the Judgment of the great Day*: but the rest, even *the elect Angels*, remain his glorious Attendants, for ever ready and attentive to obey his holy Commands, happy in the continual Praises of him, who sits on the Throne, and the Lamb for ever.

Man.

VIII. A LITTLE lower than this glorious Order was *Man* created; after the Image of God created he him, in Righteousness and Holiness, with Dominion over the Creatures. I believe, that God created our first Parents perfectly upright, capable of standing in their own Righteousness, and by their own Power; they being en-

dued

(e) 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

(f) Jude 6.

dued with rational and immortal Souls, and having the Law of GOD written in their Hearts.

IX. IN this their holy and happy Con-^{Fall.}dition, I believe, it pleased the holy and righteous GOD, to appoint a positive Test of their Obedience, in forbidding them to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil upon Pain of Death: but that our first Parents, did, contrary to the Command of their Creator, eat of the Fruit of this Tree, being tempted by Satan, the Adversary of Souls, and thereby *apostatized* from GOD, forfeited his Favour, and exposed themselves and their Posterity to everlasting Ruin.

X. FOR I believe, that our first Parent^{Guilt.} *Adam* was the federal Head of his Posterity, the Representative of all Mankind descending from him by ordinary Generation; and that if he had stood in his Integrity, we should have stood with him: but as he sinned, we also fell with him in his first Transgression; so that all the world are become *guilty* before God, and are rendered liable to the Miseries of this Life, the Pains of Death, and the Torments of Hell for ever. (g) *Wherefore as by one Man, Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death has passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.*

XI. I

(g) Romans v. 12.

Depravity. XI. I BELIEVE, that our Persons are not only guilty, but our Natures *depraved*, and unclean through the Fall; *that our Hearts are deceitful above all Things and desperately wicked, that our minds and Consciences are defiled*, that we are spiritually dead in Trespasses and Sins, *having no Hope, and without GOD in the World.*

Election. XII. I BELIEVE, that GOD from all Eternity foreseeing Man's Rebellion against him, had Thoughts of Peace towards some of his apostate Creatures; and therefore merely out of the Riches of his sovereign Grace and distinguishing Love, and not from a Foresight of any Good in them, did *elect* a particular Number to Holiness here, and Happiness hereafter. *(b) According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love. (i) Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ, before the World began.*

Mediator. XIII. I BELIEVE, that GOD from all Eternity, chose and ordained JESUS CHRIST his only begotten Son, to be *the Mediator* between GOD and Men; to whom he gave a peculiar Seed to be justified, and sanctified, and made meet for the Inheritance

(b) Ephes. i. 4.

(i) 2 Tim. i. 9.

tance of the Saints in Light. (k) *Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.*

XIV. I BELIEVE also, that in the Fulness ^{Incarna-} of Time JESUS CHRIST, the second Person in ^{tion.} the sacred Trinity, very and eternal God, did *take on him the human nature*, and came into the World to fulfil the Work of Redemption; that he was conceived by the Power of the HOLY GHOST, in the Womb of the *Virgin Mary*, born of her and yet without Sin; so that two distinct Natures, the GODHEAD and the Manhood are inseparably united together in one Person; which Person is very GOD and very Man, yet one CHRIST, who is the one and only Mediator between GOD and Men, the Man CHRIST JESUS.

XV. I BELIEVE also, that this JESUS ^{Life.} CHRIST is the true MESSIAH, in whom the Prophecies are fulfilled, and the Types and Shadows of the Law perfectly answered; that while on Earth *he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from Sinners*, and was a perfect Example of sinless Obedience; that after a *Life* of unwearied Diligence in doing the Will of his heavenly Father, (a Life of many Troubles, as *he was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief,*) by the determinate Counsel of GOD, ^{Death.}

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he

(k) 1 Cor. i. 30.

Resurrec-
tion.

he was at last brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, that he was condemned as a Malefactor by Jews and Gentiles, and suffered an ignominious *Death* on the accursed Tree: And farther, being dead, by a real Separation of the Soul and Body, I believe he remained three Days in the state of the Dead, though he saw no Corruption; on the third Day therefore *(l)* he *arose from the Grave*, having burst the Bands of Death asunder, *it being impossible he should be bolden of it: (m)* Knowing that Christ being raised from the Dead, dieth no more, *Death hath no more Dominion over him: He was delivered for our Offences, and was raised again for our*

Ascension.

Justification: That he in the same Body in which he arose from the Dead, *ascended* up into Heaven, and there sits at the right Hand of the Majesty on high, with his Father and our Father, his God and our God, continually interceding for his People, and exercising his royal Authority on their Behalf.

Atone-
ment.

XVI. I BELIEVE, that the LORD JESUS CHRIST by his perfect Obedience to the Will of his heavenly Father, and by the Sacrifice of himself, hath fully, by this his active and passive Obedience, *satisfied* divine Justice, and made Reconciliation for

(l) Acts ii. 24.*(m)* Romans vi. 9.

for his chosen People; and by his Death hath purchased for them the heavenly Inheritance. (n) *Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of GOD.* (o) *For by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. There is none other name given under Heaven among Men, whereby we can be saved, but the Name of Christ; for he is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no Man cometh to the Father but by him.*

XVII. I BELIEVE, that CHRIST is a true Offices. Prophet, in that he has revealed to us the Will of God for our Salvation. — (p) *For Moses truly said, a Prophet shall the LORD your GOD raise up unto you of your Brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you. He is also our great high Priest, who has entered once for all, with his own Blood into the holy Place, having by the Sacrifice of himself put away Sin.* (q) *For the Blood of JESUS CHRIST his Son cleanseth us from all Sin:* (r) *He being a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec. He is likewise a King, who, by his Power, subdues his People to himself,*

C 2

rules

(n) Rom. iii. 25. (o) Heb. x. 14. (p) Acts iii. 22.

(q) 1 John i. 7.

(r) Hebrews v. 6.

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rules over them, and defends them from all their Enemies. (s) *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Spirit.

XVIII. I BELIEVE in the HOLY GHOST, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is very GOD; whose blessed Work and Office it is, according to the Œconomy of our Salvation, savingly to apply the Benefits of Redemption to our Souls, and to work in them all those Graces, which are necessary to fit us for a Life of Holiness here, and of Happiness hereafter. (t) *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you.*

Effectual
calling.

XIX. I BELIEVE, that those whom GOD has elected, he doth in his own due Time *call* by his Grace, out of a State of Darkness into his marvellous Light, and from the Power of Sin and Satan to the living GOD, effectually drawing them to himself by his Word and SPIRIT; yet so as they come most freely, they being by this Grace made truly willing in the Day of his Power. (u) *Whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified.*

Justifica-
tion.

XX. ACCORDINGLY I believe, that those whom GOD effectually calls, he *justifies* by the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, they being enabled by the Influences of the SPIRIT,

(s) Psalm ii. 6. (t) John xvi. 14. (u) Rom. viii. 30.

RIT, to trust in him, and receive his Righteousness by Faith, which is hereupon imputed to them, so that their Sins are pardoned, their Persons are accepted, they being freed from all the Demands of the Law and Justice; and all this, not for any Thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for CHRIST's Sake alone. (x) *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in CHRIST.* (y) *For he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in him.*

XXI. FARTHER I believe, that those ^{Adoption.} whom GOD justifies, he *adopts* into his Family, and gives them a Right to all the Privileges of his Sons. (z) *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by JESUS CHRIST to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will.* (a) *As many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his Name.*

XXII. I BELIEVE also, that those whom ^{Regeneration and Sanctification.} GOD effectually calls, he *regenerates*, and *sanctifies* by the Influences of his SPIRIT; this divine Person dwelling in them, renews their whole Nature, frees them from the Reign of Sin, and enables them to

(x) Rom. iii. 24.

(y) 2 Cor. v. 21.

(z) Ephes. i. 5.

(a) John i. 12.

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to die to it, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of the LORD; that so they may be made meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, of which his divine Presence and Grace are the sure and happy Seal and Earnest. (b) *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD.*

Perseve-
rance.

XXIII. I BELIEVE, that those whom GOD calls and sanctifies by his SPIRIT, shall never finally fall away from Grace, but *persevere* to the End, and be eternally saved. (c) *For whom he justifies, them he also glorifies. Who are kept by the Power of GOD, through Faith to Salvation. Receiving the End of your Faith, the Salvation of your Souls.*

Worship.

XXIV. I BELIEVE, that religious *Worship* is to be given to GOD the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the one GOD, and to him alone; and that Christians ought to assemble together on the LORD's Day, or Christian Sabbath, to celebrate the stated and public Ordinances of CHRIST according to the Gospel Institution, in Expectation of his gracious Promise, viz. (d) *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*

XXV.

(b) 1 Cor. vi. 11. (c) 1 Pet. i. 5, 9. (d) Mat. xviii. 20.

XXV. I BELIEVE, that among such Churches, worshipping Assemblies, all that are real Saints ought to embody into a visible Church State, in the Name and by the Authority of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and that when they are thus embodied together, all necessary Power and Authority is invested with them as real Churches, according to the New Testament Institution; that they have a Right to partake of all Gospel Ordinances, to exercise all the Discipline of a Church of CHRIST within themselves, and to choose and set apart such Pastors and Teachers, and other Officers among them, as shall be necessary for their spiritual Edification and Comfort, agreeable to the Appointment and Order of the Gospel. And farther, I believe, ever since the Apostles, (whose extraordinary Commission and Work ceased with them,) the SPIRIT of GOD has raised up Pastors, and Teachers in the Church, whom he qualifies with suitable Gifts and Measures of his Grace for the Work of the Ministry. which, through his Blessing, is the stated and effectual Means of the Conviction and Conversion of Sinners, and of building up the Churches in their most holy Faith, to the end of the World.

XXVI. I BELIEVE, that all Saints be-Communion.
ing united to CHRIST their Head, by his
SPIRIT

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SPIRIT and Faith, have *Fellowship* with him, in his Sufferings, Death and Resurrection; and also with one another, as they have all one LORD, *one Faith, one Baptism*; the same glorious Realities in View, and are distinct Members of one and the same mystical Body. (e) *Truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST. For we being many, are one Bread and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.*

Baptism.

XXVII. I BELIEVE, that *Baptism* and the LORD's Supper, are the only Sacraments instituted by CHRIST under the Gospel: That *Baptism* is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, wherein GOD has promised, to be a GOD to his People and to their Seed after them; for which Reason the Infants of Believers are to be baptized with Water, as a Sign of a spiritual Engrafture into CHRIST, and a Representation of a Soul's being internally washed by the Baptism of the HOLY GHOST, and as a Testimony of our Faith in GOD's holy Covenant.

Lord's
Supper.

XXVIII. I BELIEVE also, that in the same Night in which JESUS was betrayed, he took *Bread and Wine*; which he consecrated to the sacred Use of commemorating his Sufferings and Death for our Redemption

(e) 1 John i. 3.

demption, and that Believers are frequently to take of this Bread and Wine, the Communion of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, as a stated Gospel Ordinance, for their Growth in Grace, for the spiritual Nourishment of their Souls, and for the making them meet for the Enjoyment of God in the heavenly World; and doing this in Remembrance of the LORD, *they shew forth his Death till he come.*

XXIX. I BELIEVE the Immortality of the Soul and *a future State* of Rewards ^{Future State.} and Punishments; that when believers, being enabled to serve the Lord, have done their Generation Work, their Souls, being made perfect in Holiness, shall immediately enjoy the Presence of their God in the highest Heaven: On the other Hand, the Souls of the wicked, having filled up the measure of their Sins, shall go down to that awful Place, *where the Worm dies not, and the Fire is not quenched.*

XXX. IN Connection with this, I believe, in the last Day there will be *a Resurrection* ^{Refurrec-} of the Bodies, both of the just and unjust; that all Nations, Tongues and People shall be gathered before the great ^{Last Judg-} Tribunal to give an Account of the Deeds done in the Body whether good or evil; that then being separated by CHRIST, who shall judge the World in Righteousness, he will say to those on his right Hand,

D

Come

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Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World; but to those on his left Hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; each of which Sentences will be immediately put into Execution, These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the righteous into Life eternal.

THESE glorious Truths I desire to experience the benefit and power of, more and more in my own Soul, as well as to preach them to others: And may I never shun to declare the whole Counsel of God. Wherefore as it has pleased the LORD in his Providence, to call me to this sacred, and awful, yet honourable Work among you, *my Christian Friends*; I earnestly intreat your Prayers for me, that I may not preach to others, and myself become a Cast-away; but that I may go forth in the Strength of the LORD, making mention of his Righteousness, and that only, so that my own and my Hearer's Salvation may redound in the End, to the Praise of his glorious Grace.

Now therefore to GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghost, three divine Persons, but the same incomprehensible JEHOVAH, be equal Honours, and united Praises, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

T H E



THE
S E R M O N

PREACHED at the

ORDINATION

Of the REVEREND

Mr. *WILLIAM PORTER.*

By the REVEREND

Mr. J O H N C O N D E R.



 The Work assign'd me in this Day's Solemnity, is to address *you, my Christian Friends* of this Church and Congregation, in relation to your stated Duties towards CHRIST, towards *one another*, and towards *Him*, who hath now engaged in the pastoral Office over you, and ministerial Work among you. Accordingly I shall refer you, on this Occasion, to those affecting Words of the Apostle *Paul*,

I THESS. iii. 8.

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

 THREE Things put a Lustre upon
 T the ministerial Office, and are indeed essential to any Eminency in that sacred Profession; viz. *Skill, Labor, and Love*. The great Apostle of the *Gentiles* was eminent for them all: By a plentiful Effusion of the *Holy Spirit* in Gifts, and Graces, he was render'd exceeding *skilful* in his Work: And as his Talents
 were

The S E R M O N.

were great, his *Labors* were extraordinary; for he was continually on the Foot, in his Lord and Master's Service, that he might spread the Savor of his Knowledge in every Place. A Work in itself full of Labor, and Toil; how much more so, when attended with little else but Opposition and Outrage, both from Earth and Hell! He was environ'd with Afflictions, expos'd to the most imminent Dangers, and Distresses; yet amidst them all, he *obtain'd Mercy to be faithful*, he maintain'd the painful Conflict, and persever'd in his toilsome Course: And such was his sacred Zeal for the Church's Prosperity, that it superseded all Anxiety for himself. The Apostle had lately received good Tidings concerning these *Thessalonians*, both as to their Faith, and Charity, Ver. 6. And therefore his Heart was exceedingly knit to them in Christian Love. Our Context has in it every Expression of the warmest Affection, and the most tender Concern for their real Good: And in the Text itself, he expresses the peculiar Pleasure, and Satisfaction he took, in being inform'd of their Prosperity; he lets them know that the good Tidings received had given him, and his Fellow-Labourers in the Gospel, fresh Life, fresh Spirits, fresh Courage, and Resolution in their Work, which he
beautifully

beautifully heightens, by insinuating to them, that he looked upon their spiritual Welfare to be absolutely inseparable from his own. *Now we live, since ye stand fast in the Lord.* The Substance of these Words may be expressed in the following Propositions.

1. THE Hearts, and Lives of faithful Ministers are, in a sort, bound up in the Prosperity of the Church of God.

2. THE true Prosperity of Gospel Churches, and of the Saints as Individuals, consists in their standing fast in the LORD. Therefore,

3. BELIEVERS are under the most powerful Obligations, to take all possible Heed to a Stedfastness in their Christian Profession.

CHRISTIAN Stedfastness is the Duty inculcated in the Text; the Duty, which I would attempt a little to explain, and improve upon this Occasion. And give me Leave, *my Christian Friends*, to give Vent to something of that spiritual Affection, and Zeal for your Prosperity, which our Apostle discovers an Heart so full of towards this Gospel Church at *Thessalonica*: And excuse me if I should take the Freedom, of touching upon a few Particulars, not so usually introduced into Discourses of this Nature.

THERE

The S E R M O N.

THERE are three Things I would propose to your serious Attention, which must limit our present Enquiries.

I. I PROPOSE to enquire a little into *the Nature of the Gospel Duty* before us : Or, *what it is* for the Christian to *stand fast in the LORD*.

II. ENQUIRE, what this extensive, and weighty Duty of standing fast in the LORD may have a *special Reference to*, by an *Induction of some Particulars*.

III. ENQUIRE into some of those *powerful Obligations*, with which this important Duty stands enforced.

I. OUR first Business is, to enquire into *the Nature of the Gospel Duty* before us ; and this is, *to stand fast in the LORD*.

I. "THE Believer's Duty, and great Concern is (*στηκειν*) *to stand fast*, i. e. to be firm, steady, and uniform, in his Christian Profession, in Opposition to a fluctuating, wavering, and changeable Spirit, and Conduct ; and this amidst all Inticements, and Persuasions, or all Difficulties, Discouragements, and temporal Disadvantages, to the contrary." The same Duty is frequently pressed (and the same Word used) in other Places of the New Testament, thus, (a) *Watch ye, stand fast*

(a) 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

fast in the Faith, act the Man, be strong.
 (b) *Stand fast therefore in the Liberty, where-*
with Christ hath made us free, and be not
entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage.
 (c) *Only let your Conversation be as it be-*
cometh the Gospel of Christ; that whether I
come and see you, or else be absent, I may
hear of your Affairs, that ye stand fast in
one Spirit, with one Mind, striving together
for the Faith of the Gospel.

THE real Christian is a Man for another World; he is on his Journey to the promised Canaan, and is steadily to pursue his Course, to take good heed that he is not turned aside from his Way, or retarded and hinder'd in it. He is seeking a City that hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is GOD, such Foundations as God's eternal Purpose, and absolute Promise; the Foundations of the Redeemer's propitiatory Sacrifice, and prevalent Intercession; the Foundations of the LORD the SPIRIT's effectual Operations, and heart-animating Discoveries: His Faith has credited and embraced these Things, and is built upon them; wherefore he is to *stand fast in the Faith*, and not make Shipwreck of it, as many others do.

AGAIN, He is a Freeman, a Denizen of the (d) *Jerusalem which is above*; has a
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(b) Gal. v. 1. (c) Phil. i. 27. (d) Gal. iv. 26.

full Right, and Title to all it's sacred Privileges, and Immunities : He is therefore to stand fast *in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made him free*, to prize his Privileges, and to use them; not carelessly neglect them, or sinfully give them up to the Artifices of those who lie in wait to seduce and deceive, lest by this Means, *(e) being led away with the Error of the Wicked, he fall in the End, from his own Stedfastness*; for, the ripe Fruit of Error is Apostacy.

FARTHER, The Christian is the spiritual *Soldier*; his Life is a Warfare; Sin, the World, and the Powers of Darkness are all in League against him; his Business is to stand to his Arms, to keep within Rank and File, to maintain his Ground, and perpetuate the Conflict, so long as there is an Enemy in the Field; or, rather, 'till the great *Captain of his Salvation* graciously calls him off, to exchange Weariness and Warfare for endless Rest and Peace. Thus the Believer's Duty is *to stand fast*.

2. IT is not meerly to stand fast, but *to stand fast in the LORD*. A Passage of Scripture exactly parallel is *Phil. iv. 1. Therefore, my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord*. And answerable hereto is *Col. ii. 6. As ye have received CHRIST JESUS*

(e) 2 Pet. iii. 17.

JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in him. This is Language purely scriptural. Christian *Ethics* are grounded upon Principles which natural Religion is an entire Stranger to. The *Moralist* may stand his Ground, so long as natural Strength, natural Courage, and Fortitude support him in the Conflict, and no longer; for when these fail him, the Principles on which he acts are exhausted, and he faints and sinks of Course: But the *Gospel-Believer* stands his Ground, tho' all these fail him, because the Principle on which he acts, never does, and never will fail. (f) *He is strong in the LORD, and in the Power of his Might.* (g) *And in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting Strength.* (h) *He is strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS;* and (i) *his Grace is sufficient for him, it is made perfect in Weakness.* What the *Moralist* is, he is from himself; what the Christian is, he is from another: In the LORD, not in himself, he hath both Righteousness, and Strength. Faith derives all its Supplies from (k) *Him, in whom it hath pleased the Father, all Fulness should dwell.* The Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Hope, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Sword of the SPIRIT, are all given out to us from

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his

(f) Eph. vi. 10. (g) Isa. xxvi. 4. (h) 2 Tim. ii. 1.
(i) 2 Cor. xii. 9. (k) Col. i. 19.

his spiritual Armory. A true and genuine Faith in CHRIST is the grand moving Spring of all the Christian's Hopes, and of all his Actions: *(l)* *I am crucified with CHRIST: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me; And the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the SON of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* This is all Mystery, and Jargon to the Wise and Prudent, *i. e.* to the Wise and Prudent in their own Eyes, *for the World by its Wisdom knows not GOD*; and therefore the preaching of the Cross, or the Gospel Method of a Sinner's Salvation will still be, as it was at first, *(m)* *to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*: However, so long as there are any call'd by Grace, be they *Jews* or *Greeks*, to them it will be, *CHRIST the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD*: So long as there is a Saint on the Earth, it will be his Duty, and his Interest, to *stand fast in the LORD*.

THIS Duty of standing fast in the LORD, is of very large Extent; respecting the Interest, the Spirit, the Strength, the Authority, and the Glory, of CHRIST JESUS our LORD. We are to be stedfast in our Adherence to his Cause and Interest, to his Truths, Ways, and Ordinances; to make

(l) Gal. ii. 20.

(m) 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

make Conscience of acting in his Spirit, and by his Name, and Authority; to aim in all Things we do, or suffer, at promoting his Honor and Glory, not our own; advancing his blessed Name, and Kingdom in the World; not seeking our own Things, but the Things of JESUS CHRIST, for *(n) to us to live should be CHRIST, and to die will be our assured Gain.* Such is the Nature of this Gospel Duty; and each of these Particulars deserve Enlargement; but I hasten to my main Design, which is,

II. To enquire, what this extensive, and weighty Duty of standing fast in the LORD, may be understood *as having a special Reference unto, by an Induction of some Particulars;* and here I shall confine my Thoughts to the *four following.*

1. THE Duty of a Church's Stedfastness, has special Reference *to the Doctrines of the everlasting Gospel.*

2. To the *Authority of Christ, in the Order and Discipline of his House.*

3. To the *several Duties of their Church Relation.*

4. To their *stated Christian Walk, and Conversation becoming their most holy Profession.*

I. OUR

The S E R M O N.

I. OUR Christian Stedfastness has special Reference to the *Doctrines of the everlasting Gospel.*

GOSPEL Churches have this Privilege, and Honor, that *unto them are committed the Oracles of GOD.* They are in Possession of the Truth, and are stiled the *(o) Pillar and Ground of it.* Scripture Truths are the Church's Treasure; and a most invaluable Treasure they are, for in them we have the only solid Ground, and real Warrant for our Repentance of Sin, and Hopes of Forgiveness, for our *Repentance towards GOD, and Faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST.* The momentous Questions, "How shall Man be just with GOD?" — "How may the guilty Sinner escape the Wrath to come?" — "Whither can the wounded Conscience flee for Pardon and for Peace?" — "Or on what Foundation, may the Christian safely raise the grand, and lofty Structure, an Hope of eternal Glory?" — These, all these, had for ever remained Enquiries without an Answer, but for the Gospel of the Grace of GOD; without which, all our Faith had been Folly, our Prayers Presumption, and our Hope and Expectation of Favor from an holy GOD, had been buried in Darkness and Despair. But hereby
(through

(o) 1 Tim. iii. 15.

(through rich and adorable Grace) (p) *Life and Immortality are brought to Light*. Herein (q) *the Righteousness, and Grace of our GOD, are revealed from Faith to Faith*; Believers are (r) *begotten again to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the Dead, &c.*

Now, shall these Foundations of the Christian's Faith be lightly esteemed? Can he tamely acquiesce, in the Exchange of the Gospel of CHRIST, for *another* Gospel? Can he bear to hear these sacred Truths, which are the Pillars of his Hope and Confidence, boldly attacked and traduced, or with more artful Address undermined, and weakened by sly and crafty Insinuation against their Evidence or Importance? Or can he cordially embrace those that halt between the two Opinions, whether *Baal* be God, or *JEHOVAH* God? — whether our Salvation is by the Grace of GOD, or the free Will of *Man*? — whether our Justification in his Sight be by the Righteousness of the MEDIATOR, or by Works of Righteousness which *we* have done? — In fine, whether the Christian's Piety, Purity, and Perseverance in the Faith rest on his own *natural Strength*, and good Resolutions, or on a spiritual, *vital Union to CHRIST*, and Communion with him? Surely,

(p) 2 Tim. i. 10.

(q) Rom. i. 17.

(r) 1 Pet. i. 3.

THE SERMON.

Surely, in all these Things we ought to stand fast in the LORD; to be striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, even that System of evangelical Truths, which the LORD the SPIRIT in all Ages hath made Use of, for instructing, convincing, converting, sanctifying, consoling, and saving the Church and chosen of God in CHRIST JESUS.

THE Doctrines of the Gospel are the Food of the Believer's Faith, the very Staff of the new, and spiritual Life. If our *daily Bread* is necessary in supporting the natural Life, *this Bread from Heaven* must be of as great Importance to the Life of the Soul. Withhold the Staff of Bread, and *Nature* soon grows feeble, decays, and dies; reject the precious Doctrines of Grace, in their Truth, or Importance, and the *spiritual Man* will soon find himself in as threatening a Consumption in his Soul; an Experiment, too too often tried in the present Day; the Fruits of which are apparent. Professors unacquainted with their *Bibles*, and unsettled in their Principles, will be uncertain in their Hopes, and unsteady in their Conduct; and what is worst of all, will become an easy Prey to those, who lie in wait to deceive. And it is well known, there is a Generation sprung up amongst us, *The united Brethren*, (as they affect

affect to call themselves) whose Bond of Union (I greatly fear) is very different from the Bond of the Gospel. Christian (*s*) *Charity is indeed the Bond of Perfectness*: and their Pretensions to this Grace run very high. — No religious Contentions, no Disputes about Principles of Faith, or Worship, but all Union, all Love, all *Lamb-like Meekness*, Patience, and Peace are the Things they affect to shew, as reigning among them. An inviting Appearance this! and it has been too successful a Lure, by which Numbers of the Weak, and Unwary have been removed from their Stedfastness. These Men do not set themselves *professedly* to *oppose* and decry the great Doctrines of the Gospel, but what is much more artful, and hurtful too, they make them entirely useless in the spiritual Life: they have advanced *a Principle*, and pretend to *an Attainment*, which wholly set aside the Importance, and Use of all Gospel Doctrines at once. Their *Principle* is, “*A Child-like Love and Simplicity*,” which, with them, renders the Precepts, even of the moral Law needless, and of no Account: their *Attainment* is, “*A living*” “*in Connection with the Lamb* :” And with these Pretences, the Ax is laid to the Root of all Gospel Knowledge and Instruction ;

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Light

The S E R M O N.

Light and Darkneſs, Truth and Error, Knowledge and Ignorance, the Iron and the Clay are united together, as fit Materials to conſtitute, and perpetuate *this Family of Love.*

BUT remember, *Brethren*, the moſt heavenly Graces are not without their Counterſeits; the moſt deadly Poiſon may be contained in the harmleſs Waſer, and therefore the Church of GOD is warned, *(t) not to believe every Spirit, but to try the Spirits whether they be of GOD.* And how are we to try them? by what can we know them, but by bringing their Principles and their Practices to the infallible Standard of Truth? *(u) To the Law and to the Teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them.*

Now, if that *Chriſtian Love*, which the Word of GOD recommends, can be ſuppoſed to give Countenance to Ignorance and Error,—to ſet aſide the Importance and Uſe of the great Doctrines of the Goſpel, which infinite Wiſdom hath revealed for the Life, and Comfort of our Souls; if it can be ſuppoſed, to prompt us to make Religion, *a cloak of Covetouſneſs*, or *a pretence* to wheedle the Weak out of their natural Rights of chooſing in Marriage, according

(t) 1 John iv. 1.

(u) Iſai. viii. 20.

according to their sober and lawful Affections; of educating their Families according to their Judgment, and Duty; and of using their worldly Substance according to their Stations and Relations in Life: in fine, if a genuine Love to CHRIST and his Cause leads us back in our Worship to the Pomp and Pageantry of *Rome*; in our *Devotions*, to use the Language of the Stews; and in our *Recreations*, to imitate their Actions: if the sober Mind can admit such a Thought, then may it admit, that *Moravianism* is *Christianity*. * Yet, O strange

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to

* Far be it from me to misrepresent, or aggravate in this Matter. If the Reader should suspect any Thing of this Nature in the above Representation, I intreat him to peruse the following Tracts; viz. *Mr. Rimius's Candid Narrative, and his Supplement. — His solemn Call on Count Zinzendorf. — Andrew Frey's authentic Account. — And Mr. Whitefield's expostulatory Address to the Count. — A* tenth Part of the Facts, which these Writers charge home upon the *Count* and his Followers, ought to fill every Christian's Mind with the utmost Detestation of their Principles and Practices. However favorable the Opinion, which many in *England* have entertained of the *Moravians*, *Foreign Protestants* have thought it their Duty to bear a public Testimony against them. The Declarations of most of the Protestant Universities in *Germany*, and the royal Edicts of most of the crowned Heads, and other Princes, against the *Moravians* settling in their *German* Dominions, are a full Proof that their Tenets are looked upon abroad as of very dangerous Tendency. Their respective Apprehensions of these People may be gathered from two or three short Specimens, which I think proper to adjoin.

Specimen 1. " Their *Doctrines* not only entirely deviate
" from what is taught us in the holy Scriptures — but
" their

to tell ! some who have had a Place, even
in Gospel Churches among us, have since
yielded

“ their *Practice* likewise is of such a Nature as to enslave
“ the Conscience more than ever hath been done in *Popery*.
“ — Order and Stations in Life are confounded ; they,
“ under the Cover of the Name of GOD and CHRIST,
“ commit the greatest Wickedness chiefly with their Lot.
“ — As a Country wherein *this Sect* nests, loses its Hap-
“ piness and Tranquility, and as many Souls, who other-
“ wise are well disposed, by the *wicked Devices* of these
“ People are in Danger of losing their Salvation, it is in-
“ cumbent on a Government to prevent this *impious Sect*
“ from entering its Dominions, &c. — They are to be
“ known by their affected Holiness, and Humility, especi-
“ ally by their low Estimation of the *Scriptures*, contempt
“ of the *Clergy*, vain Chat of *Lamb, Blood, and Wounds, &c.*”
See an Ordinance in the Name of his Majesty King George II.
by his Consistory of the Dutchies of *Bremen and Verden*,
Jan. 25, 1749.

Specimen 2. “ Their Doctrines, and Undertakings are
“ so absurd, abominable and partly blasphemous, that we
“ cannot without Astonishment, and holy Indignation read
“ or hear of them, &c.” *Resp. of the University of Gieffen.*

Specimen 3. “ Their *enormous Errors* with Respect to the
“ *holy Trinity*, the *Law*, (which according to them is quite
“ abrogated,) and especially with Respect to the *conjugal*
“ *Business*, are every Day more and more discovered.
“ Such abominable Things are revealed in their Hymns,
“ as make a true Christian’s Heart bleed. — Both Uni-
“ versities, as well as all the Bodies of Divines in *Saxony*,
“ abhor this Sect, and look upon it, and its *Chief*, as a
“ *Pest to the Church* — as a *stinking and devouring Cancer*,
“ and a very great Misfortune to the poor Protestant
“ Churches.” *Resp. of the University of Leipzig.*

Specimen 4. “ We detest their Fanaticism, which gra-
“ dually is become known, and daily discovers itself more
“ and more. — Wherefore we do not cease, upon all
“ Occasions, to stand up against them, and to warn our
“ Congregations against being seduced by them. *Resp. of*
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yielded to the Force of this gross and dangerous Infatuation! — But what shall we say? (x) *With GOD is Strength and Wisdom: the Deceived and the Deceiver are his*, i. e. they are both in his Hands, whose infinite Wisdom and Power are able to bring Good out of Evil: and even by such Trials of his People's Patience, and Steadfastness, to promote his own Glory and their final Salvation. And remember, while these Things are known to you, it is of the greater Importance, that ye *stand fast* in the LORD.

POSSIBLY it may seem strange to some, I should enlarge upon this Subject; yet I was not led to it, by the least Suspicion of your needing such a Caution, more than others; but my whole Design herein, is in Confidence of your Patience and Candor, to bear a public Testimony against those Opinions, and Ways, which have so fatal

the College of Hamburg. See for all these, *Rimius's Supplement* from page 29. to the End.

I submit it, whether it does not become all, that have any Concern for real Religion, and the good of immortal Souls to do likewise, bearing our Testimony against every Mystery of Iniquity, and faithfully warning and guarding against all the dangerous, and pernicious Effects of *Moravian* Fascination.

Had I apprehended any Thing less than the Truth, and Purity of the Gospel, and all real Religion were at Stake in this Affair, I should have spared myself, and my Reader this Trouble.

(x) Job xii. 16,

fatal a Tendency to remove Professors from their Stedfastness, to do the greatest Injury to the Churches of CHRIST, and the the Souls of Men.

2. THE Duty of a Church's Stedfastness, hath special Reference to the Authority of CHRIST, as to the Order and Discipline of his House.

THERE is the Faith of the Gospel, and the Order of the Gospel: As the Christian is not to believe what he pleases, but what CHRIST has revealed; so neither to do what he pleases, but what CHRIST hath enjoined: (y) *Ye are GOD's Husbandry, ye are GOD's Building.* A Church of CHRIST, as his Husbandry, is a sacred Inclosure, under the special Care of his Eye, and the Culture of his Hand: nothing is to be planted there, but by his Authority, and with his Allowance, and that is, every living Plant, every Tree of Righteousness, which however small and tender, is in the Way of spiritual Growth.

AGAIN. The Church is GOD's Building, his sacred Temple; the Foundation is of his laying, and the Superstructure is of his raising: (z) *It is built upon the doctrinal Foundation of the Prophets, and Apostles, JESUS CHRIST himself being the chief Corner-Stone:* and he has given Commandment

(y) 1 Cor. iii. 9.

(z) Eph. ii. 20.

ment concerning the Materials: they are all to be *living Stones*, cemented together by that heaven-born Charity, which is the Bond of Perfection. He hath open'd the Door into his House, and commanded us (a) *to mark well the entering in, and every going forth of the Sanctuary*. The Door of Admission is a sound Head, and a sanctified Heart; a Belief of the Truth, and an Experience of its Power: all such, however small in their own Eyes, or low in their spiritual Stature, have the REDEEMER'S Welcome unto his House, and all the Privileges, and Immunities thereof. And when, in his Name, and by his Authority, we have been admitted in, it is an Affront to this Authority, and a Breach of our Fealty, to seek Occasions of withdrawing. Occasions truly there be some Times for such a Proceeding; Churches are not to be made Prisons, for his Saints to stay and starve in, ('tis very melancholly when Things are come to such a Pass;) yet where there has been a solemn giving up of ourselves to CHRIST, and to one another, to walk together in the Faith and Order of the Gospel as a Church, the withdrawing from such Communion, upon *slight and trivial* Grounds, at the Back-Door (for Instance) of Caprice and Humor,

or

(a) Ezekiel xliv. 5.

or upon a Change in the Ministry of the Church, or on Complaint of not profiting by the Word, or a fond Expectation of profiting more by another, &c. while your own Pastor abides in the Truth, and labors according to his Abilities for the good of your Souls; — I say, the withdrawing merely on such Accounts as these, is not only a damping the Spirits of *the Minister* you leave, but a disheartening *the whole Church*, with whom you have walked; and in a Degree it is breaking Covenant with them to desire a Dismission, and appears to be a seeking your own Things, rather than the Things of *JESUS CHRIST*.

PERMIT me to add, it has been frequently found, that those who have been weary of one Communion upon trifling Grounds, have after a Time been as weary of another, and a third; while *the steady Christian* walking in the Fear of the LORD, eyeing the Authority and Glory of CHRIST, keeping close to his Ordinances in the Church where he is a Member, and uniformly filling up his Relation, and pursuing his Duty therein; such an one finds the Word blest, the Presence of God enjoy'd, and the Life of Grace carried on with Power and Comfort in him. To do thus is to *stand fast* in the LORD, and the more steady we stand, the more is *THE SAVIOR* exalted. AGAIN,

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AGAIN. As there is Order, so there is *Discipline* in his House. The LORD reigns in *Zion*; He sits the sovereign and universal King on the Throne of *David*; thence has he given forth his Royal Laws and Mandates, his Statutes, and Ordinances, for our dutiful Observance. We are not only *(b)* to put on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, but to be concern'd that we *(c)* walk worthy of him, unto all pleasing. Steady Principles and strict Discipline, are the Glory of a Gospel Church. The Family of CHRIST is a Family of Order, and Regularity, not of Anarchy, and Confusion: The End of all his Commandments is Purity, and Peace; but neither will be long preserved, where *Church Discipline* is neglected. A Garden may be well sown and water'd, yet shamefully over-run with the most noxious Weeds: Weeds will grow, when Care is not taken at their first springing up. To this End, CHRIST hath clothed his Churches with Authority from himself; they have not only his Permission, but his Command, both *(d)* to mark them who cause Divisions, and *(e)* to put them from among them who walk disorderly. When Offences are given, foul Enormities committed, tender Con-

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(b) Rom. xiii. 14.

(c) Col. i. x.

(d) Rom. xvi. 17.

(e) 2 Thess. iii. 6.

sciences stumbled, and a Church, through Partiality, or Favor, or Fear, neglects to redress the Grievance, they sin against the REDEEMER'S Honor, and their own Prosperity. For the present, they may seem to enjoy themselves in Peace, but to have Peace without Purity, is to sleep (as it were) upon a Dunghill, a Rest unsafe, and unfit for those, whose Glory it is, to *(f)* *be undefiled in the Way.* Had Zimri Peace, who slew his Master? Had Peter Peace, when he denied his LORD? No more can the Christian long enjoy it, who sins against him; or the Church, which suffers him to be *wounded in the House of his Friends.*— But *we* live, and *you* live too, when ye stand fast in the LORD. Christian Steadfastness respects Gospel Order and Gospel Discipline, as well as Gospel Truths, and Experience. Discipline and Order may be contemptible with those who are guided only by their Affections, and forget there is a Glory due to CHRIST *as King in Zion*; but we have Reason to fear that Religion itself will be render'd contemptible by the Practices of many, in the Neglect of them. 'Tis an awful Sign of our Times, that many *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*, and practice that Unrighteousness with Impunity, and without Notice; whereas it is essential
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(f) Psalm cxix. 1.

to the Honor and Prosperity of a Church of CHRIST, by the whole of their Proceedings to shew, that they hate Iniquity, and *cannot bear that which is evil* among them. And (g) *we have this Confidence in the LORD touching you (Brethren) that ye both do, and will do the Things which he hath commanded; for the LORD is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from Evil. Now we live, if ye stand fast in the LORD.*

3. CHRISTIAN Stedfastness hath special Reference to all other particular Duties of a Church Relation.

A GOSPEL Church-State is as a Garden inclosed; 'tis an Interest by itself; the Stranger intermeddles not with it. 'Tis the Christian's greatest Honor, and highest Interest to have a Name and a Place in the House of God: The Privileges are Royal, the Endowments magnificent, the Advantages great, and the Duties momentous, and Many. (h) *Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a purchased People, that ye should shew forth the Virtues of him, who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvelous Light.* Believers in Church Communion are to take Care of themselves, and mutual Care of one another, to watch over each other in the

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LORD,

(g) 2 Theff. iii. 3, 4.

(h) 1 Pet. ii. 9.

The S E R M O N.

LORD; to build one another up in their most holy Faith, to encourage mutually in the good Ways of GOD, and by all appointed Means to promote each others best and everlasting Interests. (i) Ye beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy Faith, praying in the HOLY GHOST, keep yourselves in the Love of GOD, looking for the Mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal Life. Duties they owe to GOD; Duties they owe to their Families, and the World; Duties they owe to one another; and Duties also to those that are set over them in the LORD. Time forbids our Attendance to each of these Particulars: Indulge me with your farther Attention a little upon the last, and I will hasten towards a Close.

THE Relation between Pastor and People is near and intimate, and the Obligations which result from it are great and engaging. Your Pastor's Duties to you will be set before him, by a more venerable and able Hand: As to your Christian Duty and Carriage towards him, permit me to stir up your Minds by Way of Remembrance in the following Things.

First. YOUR Duty towards your Minister and Pastor consists, in an honoring, and esteeming him for his Work's Sake.

(k) Let

(i) Jude 20, 21.

(k) *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double Honor, especially, they who labor in the Word and Doctrine.* Pastors, whatever they are in Years, are Elders in Office, and as such, they have a Right to your respectful Carriage and Regard; in order to which, there must be a real cordial Christian Love and Esteem for *their Persons*. Unless we possess the Hearts of our People, there is little Prospect of our discharging our Office to their Soul's Advantage. Love will take all Things well, but without it almost all Things will be amiss. The most solid, and precious Truths will sound with an ill Grace from the Lips of him against whom we are prejudiced; in this Case Persons hear as *Critics*, not as *Christians*, and in such a Spirit, no Wonder they go away unimproved. Without your Love, all our Advices, Cautions, and Reproofs, however faithful, seasonable, and just, will lose their Authority and Use; it is well if they are not mistaken for *Flings*, and Reflections. In a Word, where there is not a real and genuine Love, every indifferent Action is heightened into Folly and Weakness, every Freedom into an Affront, every Oversight and Omission into an Offence, and every common Infirmary becomes a Crime; but where

where Affection dwells, our Ministrations are acceptable, our Reproofs are useful, and our Characters are dear: Yea, our Infirmities and Weaknesses then appear in their proper Light; not as Occasions of Detraction and Slander, but as Proofs that we also are in the Body, and need your brotherly Sympathy, Advices and Prayers.

LET brotherly Love continue, and in order to maintain it, Things must be attended to as Circumstances vary. Remember *your* Pastor is at present *young*; wherefore expect not Things from him above his Experience, and Years. Expect Truth from his Lips, a Savor in his Spirit, and a Circumspection, and Exemplariness in his Converse and Walk; these (I hope) it will be your Comfort, and his Mercy to have always abounding: But to expect all the Solidity and Judgment, all the Sagacity and Penetration, all the Wisdom and Foresight, the Caution and Care of riper Years, is to over-rate the most promising Capacity, and most willing Mind. But where there is Seriousness, Humility, Industry, and an Aim sincere to do the best, Love will overlook the numerous smaller Mistakes and Deficiencies, which farther Age and Experience must gradually correct and supply. Christian Love and Esteem then, is *fundamental* to *his* Usefulness, and *your*
own

own Peace. No less so to every other Duty you owe him.

Secondly. YOUR Duty towards your Minister and Pastor consists, *in your Acquaintance with him, and Use of him.* (1) *We beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord.* Things always go on but indifferently, when Pastor and People live Strangers to each other. How shall they love him, unless they know him? And how can they know him, without free and frequent Converse with him? Wherefore acquaint yourselves with your Minister, visit him, and let him know his Visits are acceptable to you. (We sometimes want this Encouragement, lest we suspect ourselves burthensome, where we meant to be useful.) And be sure *to use his Visits* when you have them: Remember his Character, he is a *Steward of the Mysteries of GOD.* Converse freely with him about the Things of God, open your spiritual Conditions to him, relate Matters of your Experience, your Trials and your Comforts, even the various Exercises of your Souls in the Course of your Walk with God. At other Times enquire into Doctrines, or particular Texts of Scripture, or such Cases of Conscience, as may present themselves

(1) 1 Thess. v. 12.

The S E R M O N.

Yelves with some Difficulty to your Minds, in the Course of your Observation or Dealings in Life. And in some Cases for a Child, or a Servant to be gently reprov'd before him when Occasion requires it, for the Sake of their having his ministerial Counsel and Caution, which may be of singular Advantage, through the Blessing of God.—These are some of the Ways in which our ministerial Visits should be improved by our People, and they are often as useful to ourselves as to you: for our Sakes therefore as well as your own, *know them that have the Rule over you.*

Thirdly, ANOTHER Thing wherein a People's Duty towards their Pastor consists, is *their constant and diligent Attendance upon his ministerial Labors among them.*

WHAT I would here inculcate, is not a slavish Confinement, but only a Christian Steadiness. The spiritual Relation between a Pastor and People is such, that ordinarily and statedly a Preference ought to be given to his ministerial Labors, before all others; these are immediately the Ordinance of CHRIST for your spiritual Nourishment and Growth. The Talents of some others may be greater, or their Gifts more pleasing, (and their Labors *may be occasionally* enjoyed with Profit and Thankfulness) yet have you greater Warrant to expect the
 Presence

Presence of God with you, when you are conscientiously filling up your own proper Places in the Church you belong to, than when following the most celebrated Preachers within your Reach. — *Itching Ears* are no Friends to a gracious Heart: nor do rambling Hearers often make sound Believers, or circumspect Walkers. What though I am occasionally feasted at my Friend's Table, my main Support must be from the more ordinary Provisions of my own; nor is a nice and fickle Appetite any Proof of an healthy Constitution. — The Thing indeed speaks for itself; the skilful and faithful Pastor will be laboring, *to root and ground his People in the Truth*, (which cannot be effectually done without pursuing Truths in their Connection,) and to improve his Christian Visits, by speaking home to particular Cases as they come fairly in his Way: but what a Discouragement to him, and Disadvantage to you, to have your Places empty, when his Preparations were designed in a peculiar Manner for *your* Instruction and Comfort! Keep then close to your Places, as ever you expect to profit much by his Labors.

Fourthly, ANOTHER Branch of the People's Duty to their Minister lies *in their encouraging, and assisting him in his Work*. His Life is to be spent in ministring to you

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The S E R M O N.

in *Spirituals*; from the Nature of the Thing then, are you to support him in *Temporals*: that which is meet is not to be withheld from him, but in the Breach of a most exprefs Command of the LORD. (m) CHRIST's Service indeed, is worth our persisting in, amidst Famine and Nakedness, Necessities and Wants; but he makes it not his Servant's Duty to starve in the midst of Plenty, who has a Right to your Encouragement, as you have to his Labors, and both in Proportion to the Abilities which God has given. Many would have Reason to expect a greater Blessing of the Gospel, did they make Conscience of doing more to support it; for he (n) *which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly*.—— But I trust there is no need of great Enlargement here. The LORD bless the Labors of his Servant among you, and then I doubt not of your Readiness to every good Word and Work. I proceed therefore just to mention one Thing more.

Lastly. A PEOPLE's Duty towards their Minister and Pastor consists, *in their continued Prayers and supplications for him*. Brethren pray for us. Our Work is great — our Temptations many — and all our Furniture is from above. Pray hard, pray earnestly then, for your Pastor as well as for

(m) 1 Cor. ix. 13.

(n) 2 Cor. ix. 6.

for yourselves; that is the Way for him to preach well, and for you to hear, and walk well. They who complain most of their Minister, usually pray the least for him; and what is lacking in your Prayers, you may reasonably expect should be so in your Provision. — Ministerial Instructions, as well as other Enjoyments, have their peculiar Sweetness and Use, when they come in Answer to Prayer.

THUS have I endeavoured to represent, though very imperfectly, what it is for a Church of CHRIST to stand fast in the Lord, in Reference to — the great and glorious Doctrines of the Gospel, — the Order and Discipline of the House of God, — and the several Duties of a Church Relation. — To which we must always add,

4. A STATED *Walk and Conversation becoming our most holy Profession*. This is the Crown and Glory of a Christian Profession, and is indeed the immediate great End of a Gospel Ministration, and a Gospel Church-state. The Truths revealed, the Ordinances appointed, and the Duties enjoined, are all only *Means* in the SPIRIT'S Hand of producing this Effect: (o) *For this is the Will of GOD, even your Sanctification*. And (p) *without Holiness no Man*

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Man

(o) 1 Theff. iv. 3.

(p) Heb. xii. 14

The S E R M O N.

Man shall see the LORD. A Faith without Fruits, a Profession without Purity is the most awful Mistake, the most dangerous Self-deceit an immortal Soul can be under. *To turn the Grace of GOD into Lasciviousness*, has been indeed an old Practice, and I am afraid is still too much in Being: However, blessed be God, I trust, none of us have so learned CHRIST; but have indeed felt (and may we more and more feel!) the opposite Constraints of his redeeming Love, and of the holy Commandment, (q) *Let every one that nameth the Name of CHRIST depart from Iniquity.*

As therefore there is neither Time nor Occasion (as I hope) for farther Enlargement, I shall take my Leave of the Subject, with a Word or two on the last general Head, which is properly an Improvement of the whole. Hence,

III. I PROMISED to enquire into some of *those powerful and peculiar Obligations, by which this important Duty stands enforced.*—I shall mention three.

1. As you value your *Minister's Lives, stand fast in the LORD.* This is the affecting Argument which is used in the Text, *Now we live, if ye stand fast in the LORD.* To be faithful Stewards is a laborious Employment,

(q) 2 Tim. ii. 19.

ployment, yet not our *Labors*, so much as our *Disappointments*, our *Want of Success*, our various *Discouragements* which weaken our Hands, dispirit and wear us out in our Work. And would you not have your Pastor go on with Spirit and Courage in his Work? would you not have him valiant for Truth? lively in his Ministrations? diligent in his Studies? comfortable in his Soul? chearful and assiduous in the whole of his Charge? — Then *stand ye fast in the L O R D*.

2. As you value your own Souls, and their everlasting Prosperity, *stand ye fast in the L O R D*.

YES; the Salvation of the Soul, nothing less than this, is the End of our Preaching, and your Hearing; (r) *and if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*. — Is not Salvation in your account the great Concern? Would you grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS? Would you be rooted and grounded in Love? would you taste the Sweets of CHRIST'S Presence here, and enjoy his Fulness hereafter? *then stand ye fast in the L O R D*.

3. As you value CHRIST'S Love, CHRIST'S Authority and CHRIST'S Glory, *stand ye fast in the L O R D*.

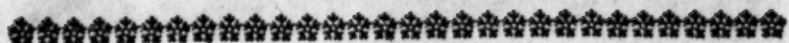
BELIEVERS (s) *are not their own, they are bought with a Price; an inestimable,*
an

(r) Eph. iii. 17.

(s) 1 Cor. vi. 20.

an astonishing Ransom! The Blood of the eternal, the adorable SON of GOD! his Love to us engaged him to bleed and die for us; a singular and amazing Foundation this, for *his* Authority over us, and *our* Subjection to him. — Surely if there is the least Taste of a SAVIORS Love, and the weakest Faith in his atoning Blood, it will inspire the Soul with a Zeal for his Authority and Glory. Whom should the Believer serve? whose Honor should he study: for whom should he employ all his Talents and his Strength? but for HIM *(t)* *who has loved us and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto GOD and his FATHER, to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Wherefore stand fast in the LORD. *(u)* And now, Brethren, I commend you to GOD, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

(t) Rev. i. 5.*(u)* Acts xx. 32.



THE
EXHORTATION

To the REVEREND

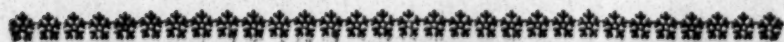
Mr. *WILLIAM PORTER.*

GIVEN AT HIS

ORDINATION:

By the REVEREND

Mr. THOMAS HALL.



EXHIBITION

to the I. & O. S. S.

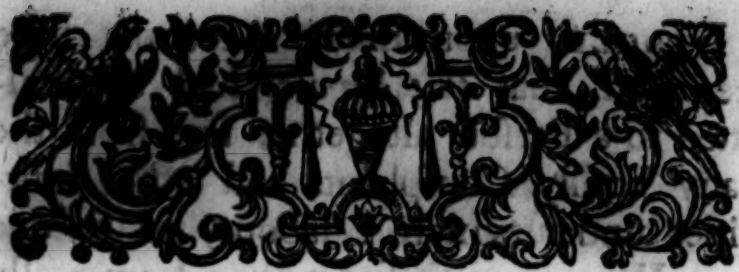
MILLIAM FORKES

GIVEN BY THE

ORDINATION

By the I. & O. S. S.

M. THOMAS HALL



T H E

Exhortation, &c.

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I
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 T has been thought proper, *my dear Brother*, that upon your having recognized and publickly declared your Acceptance of the Call of this Church to be their Pastor, you should now, in the Name of the LORD, and before this Congregation who have been Witnesses of the religious and weighty Transactions of this Day, be solemnly address'd in such an animating Word of godly *Exhortation*, as might be likely to excite you to a vigorous and faithful Prosecution of that very important Work, which in a profess'd Dependance upon the Grace and Strength of our Divine Master you have come under the most strict and sacred Engagement to perform.

I

I COULD

I COULD upon many Accounts have been glad, that *this Service* had been allotted to a Person altogether free from the many bodily Complaints and other Infirmities under which I labour, or to one every Way more fit for it than I am really conscious I can be. But since, both by your own and the Church's Request, it has been made *my Province*; I have endeavour'd, after waiting upon God for His gracious Assistance, to prepare a few Hints which I cannot but think are somewhat pertinent and suitable to the Occasion.

I WOULD be far from assuming any Air of Authority, but as a Brother would beseech you to bear with my Freedom, while with Earnestness and Sympathy I lay before you, from the Scripture of Truth, several important Things, which will call for your careful Attention from the Beginning to the very End of *the Ministry* which you have *received in the LORD*.

THE Substance of the Advice I shall give you is grounded upon that Passage of the Apostle *Paul*,

I COR.

I COR. iv. 1, 2.

Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD: Moreover it is required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful.

I DOUBT not, *Brother*, but upon the mentioning of these Words you will think with me, that among other Matters they imply a special Direction to *Ministers* themselves, both elder and younger, to make the most close and solemn Reflection upon these Three Things, *viz.*

- I. THE *Character* they bear.
- II. THE *Business* or *Work*, which belongs to that Character; and,
- III. THE *Faithfulness* with which that Work is to be performed.

ACCORDINGLY let me press you to think seriously,

I. WHAT *Character* you bear.

'Tis that of a *Minister of CHRIST*, and *His Steward*. Here it is fit we should observe, that tho' *all the Disciples*
 I 2 of

of *CHRIST* are bound to serve Him as their Lord and Master, yet they are not *all* in an ecclesiastical Sense *his Ministers*. And tho' all his Servants are intrusted with some Talents which they are to employ to his Glory, yet *all his Servants* have not, in the full Meaning of the Apostle's Expression, the Place and Office of a *Steward*.

A GOSPEL Church, you know, is often represented in Scripture as *the House* of GOD, and *the Family* of CHRIST. And as in the Families of earthly Lords and Masters, so in *the House* of GOD, there is a just Foundation for a Distinction to be made betwixt a *Steward* and other Servants. For tho' *all GOD's People* are in some Regard *Stewards*, and it is certain every one of them in particular *must give an Account of his Stewardship*; yet *all* are not in an oeconomical Sense *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*, as they are whom the Apostle styles *the Ministers of CHRIST*.

HOWEVER we must further observe, that tho' every Servant be not in a ministerial Sense a *Steward*, yet every ministering *Steward* is a *Servant*: And if he be not an upright and diligent Servant, it is not to be expected, that he can be a faithful *Steward*.

HERE, Sir, your own Thoughts will readily suggest, that 'tis at least as necessary

sary for a *Minister*, to attend to all the Duties and Services of the Christian Life, as it is for the *People*.

THERE is a Revenue of Glory which justly results from a State of *Discipleship*, which is equally required of *every one*, that is called of the LORD into that happy State and Relation. And 'tis impossible, that any *Minister* should be *faithful* in his Place as a *Steward*, if he does not first aim to be strictly *faithful* as a Disciple or a *Servant*. Hence we may conclude, that no Man can be a good *Minister* of the Gospel, if he be not first a true *Believer*, an upright Disciple, or a sincere Christian: One, who is not only *apt to teach* (a), but *ready to every good Work* (b).

IT was a very wicked and shameful Part, which was acted by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* of old, in that they laid heavy *Burdens upon Others*, which they themselves would not so much as touch with one of their *Fingers* (c). See that this never be your Case; but while you press the *People* to abound in the Duties of Christianity, endeavour so to abound and so to shine therein yourself, that by your good Works our heavenly Father may be much glorified (d).

BUT

(a) 1 Tim. iii. 2.

(b) Tit. iii. 1.

(c) Matt. xxiii. 4.

(d) Matt. v. 16.

The EXHORTATION.

BUT since I am at this Time more especially to desire you, to attend to the *Character* you bear, not merely as a *Christian* or a *Servant*, but as an *Officer* in the Church, even that of a *Pastor*; let me remind you, that *as such* you are called to be a *Minister of CHRIST*, and *His Steward*. 'Twas in His Name, and by His Authority, *this Office* itself was appointed; and 'tis *He only*, that can give any a *Commission*, which will warrant before GOD their Execution of it.

As to the *Apostles*, they received *their Commission* from CHRIST in an immediate manner: But where the Gospel had been planted, it was the Appointment of our LORD, that *every Church* should choose *their own Officers*; and we are now to esteem *the Voice of the People*, while they proceed according to the Rules of His Word, to be *the Voice of GOD*.

AND is it not thus, (as has this Day been declared,) that you, Sir, have received a *Commission* from CHRIST, the sole Head of the Church and Master of the Family, to act for Him as *his Steward*?

LET then your Character as a *Steward* constantly admonish you,

I. THAT you are *accountable* for the whole of your Conduct,

LET

LET this awakening Thought have a continual Influence upon you, and engage you thro' every Part of your Office to act as a Person that is expecting a *future Reckoning*, and as becomes One, who is duly apprehensive, that as such a Time will certainly come, so you know not *how near* its Approach may be; for "*Mortis bora latet.*" Neither you, nor any other can tell, within how short a Space it may be said unto himself in particular, *Give an Account of thy Stewardship, for thou shalt be no longer Steward (e).* Again,

2. SINCE you are *but a Steward*, let your Character teach you to *know your Place*.

You are not at any Time, or in any Instance, to *lord it over G O D's Heritage (f)*. Never pretend to have, never dare to act as if you thought you had, a *Dominion over the People's Faith*; but endeavour with all Humility to be *the Helper of their Joy (g)*. Farther,

3. REMEMBER *whose Steward* you are.

AND in this View let the Consideration of the infinite Glory of the *heavenly Master* whom you serve, quicken you to *magnify your*

(e) Luke xvi. 2. (f) 1 Pet. v. 3. (g) 2 Cor. i. 24.

your Office (b), by humbly admiring the rich Grace which has confer'd *this Honour* upon you. For this you have the Example of the great Apostle, who thankfully acknowledg'd it as a remarkable Instance of Divine Grace and Favour, that *to him it was given to preach among the Gentiles the unfearchable Riches of Christ (i)*. And if the LORD shall be graciously pleased to make you faithful and successful, the *Commission* you have received will be found, next to the *Apostleship* itself, to be *the highest Honour* GOD ever confers upon any sinful Mortals in this World.

To conclude this Head, since you are *CHRIST's Steward*, be very laborious, bold, and couragious in your Master's Work. For He can, and I humbly trust, He will strengthen you: And you are called, yea even commanded, to be *strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS (k)*, whose *Steward* you are.

To these and such like Purposes as what I have now mentioned, be often thinking, *Brother*, of the *Character* you bear. And be very careful likewise,

II. To study the *Business* or *Work*, which belongs to that Character.

WHAT

(b) Rom. xi. 13. (i) Eph. iii. 8. (k) 2 Tim. ii. 1.

WHAT this is, the Apostle pretty plainly intimates, by styling the *Ministers* of CHRIST *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*: By which Expression we are taught, that the most sacred and invaluable *Treasure of the Gospel* is intrusted with them, that they may faithfully *dispense it* for the Benefit of God's Household to the Glory of his Name. Their *Business* then includes — a diligent *Publication* of the *Truths* of the Gospel, — with a careful *Administration* of all its *Ordinances*.

LET me therefore exhort you, *Brother*, to be careful in *preaching* the *Truths* of the Gospel: For *Necessity is laid upon you*, yea, *Woe is unto you if you preach not the Gospel (1)*. Where I humbly conceive, we should not duly attend to the Emphasis of the Apostle's Expression, if we did not understand him to signify thereby, not barely that an absolute *Necessity* was *laid upon him* by the Commission he had received, to be *diligent in Preaching*, but that it was equally *necessary for him* to be very careful *what Doctrines* he preached. It was not only *Woe unto him*, if he did not *preach* according to the Strength and Opportunity that should be afforded; but *Woe unto him*, if whenever he did preach

K

he

(1) 1 Cor. ix, 16.

he was not careful to *preach the Gospel*, even the Gospel of *the Kingdom of GOD*, teaching those Things which concern the Lord *Jesus Christ*. (m)

AND dreadful indeed will it be for any one, that bears this Character of a *Steward of the Mysteries of GOD*, if he carelessly neglect, but more especially, if he studiously *shun to declare all the Counsel of GOD*, (n) or any Part of His *Mysteries*.

AMONG these *Mysteries*, you know, Sir, are included all those Matters of divine and supernatural *Revelation*, which have a Respect to the Riches and Glory of the *Wisdom and Grace of GOD*, as exercised and displayed in the Salvation of Sinners by *Jesus Christ*. Yea, by these *Mysteries* is meant the whole *Doctrine of CHRIST*, both with Regard to the singular and wonderful Constitution of *His Person as GOD-MAN*, and the Dignity of *His Office as He is the great and only Mediator between GOD and Men*; and with Regard to the *Benefits* which he purchased for His People, when He gave Himself a *Ransom* for them; together with the special *Obligations* that result from thence, to a most spiritual truly evangelical Worship and Holy Walk.

THESE, Brother, are the Things which I, and which I am perswaded you likewise, apprehend

m) Acts xxviii. 31.

(n) Acts xx. 27.

apprehend to be *the deep Things* that the Apostle calls *the Mysteries of God*, with the Dispensation or Publication of which the *Ministers of CHRIST* are intrusted. For we must suppose, that by *the Mysteries* whereof Ministers are made *Stewards*, the Apostle intended *such Things*, and such only, as God has been pleased to reveal in His Word concerning Himself, and His Counsel and Way of saving Sinners by the Death and Atonement of his own Son.

AND these spiritual and heavenly Things are justly termed *Mysteries*, not merely because they *could not have been known* at all, if God had not been pleased to reveal them; but because, after the clearest and and fullest *Revelation* that has or can be made of them, there is *such a Depth* of Wisdom and Knowledge, of Mercy, Grace, and Love in them, as *exceeds all human Comprehension*, yea, as surpasses the Knowledge of the most exalted and enlarged Capacity of any created Understanding.

THUS for Instance we find, that with Regard to one very important and most comfortable Article of Divine Revelation, namely, that of the spiritual and vital *Union and conjugal Relation* which there is betwixt CHRIST and every true Believer, the Apostle calls it *a Mystery*. (o) And you

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know,

(o) Ephes. v. 32.

know, Sir, he calls it so, after he had expressly *made known* the Truth and Reality of such a Privilege, and very particularly insisted upon the Certainty and Advantage of it.

IN like Manner, there are *many other* very important and interesting Matters of supernatural Revelation contained in the Scriptures, which, though the Truth and Certainty of them has been *clearly revealed* and is no longer hid as an absolute Secret, yet after and according to the Revelation that is made of them, they have, and are declared to have, *unsearchable Riches* of Glory in them. And because the infinite *Perfection* and *Fulness* of the Wisdom, Righteousness, Grace, and other Attributes of JEHOVAH, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, concerned in the Contrivance, Performance, and Application of the great Things of Salvation, do still and ever must remain *a bottomless Depth*, which the Creature can never fathom, there is just Reason (as all that are saved will ever allow) for a most humble Acknowledgement, to the Glory of *each* of the sacred THREE, that these *Things of Salvation* are really and properly speaking, very great, wonderful, and glorious *Mysteries*.

AND

AND be assured, *Brother*, you can never discharge *the Work* and Duty of your Place as a *Steward* in the House of God, if you do not, according to the best of your Knowledge in *these Mysteries*, carefully insist upon them, and teach them unweariedly, both in your Preaching and Conversation.

BUT though among *all these Mysteries*, there is not *any one*, but what is of some Importance to the Glory of God and the Good of Souls, and therefore ought not to be neglected; yet I shall point out *a few Heads* of those *Gospel-Truths*, which I humbly conceive it to be most absolutely necessary for *Ministers* to teach, and *the People* to receive. Let me then earnestly intreat and beseech you, *Dear Brother*, frequently to inculcate, and in your Preaching to dwell much upon *such as these*, which I shall now mention. For doubtless *the Mysteries of God* include,

I. THE Doctrine of the TRINITY, or those sublime Truths declared in the Word of God, which set forth *a Trinity of Persons* in the *Unity of the Godhead*.

You are to shew the People, that in the Scriptures we are taught, that FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT are absolutely *co-equal*,
because

The EXHORTATION.

because *co-essential* and *co-eternal*: These THREE being ONE in Nature, as well as in Counsel, Will, and Operation.

AND these THREE *Divine Subsistencies* are the ONE glorious JEHOVAH, who at first *created* and still preserves and governs *all Things*, and is the *one only living and true GOD*, who is the proper and sole Object of all religious Worship and Adoration.

2. IN the *Mysteries of GOD* are included likewise *the Things*, which the Scriptures teach concerning *the Fourfold State of Man*.

BE you careful therefore to instruct the People, that *Man* was originally formed with a *perfect Rectitude* in his Nature; for *GOD made Man upright*: (p) But that he is now *fallen by Transgression* from that high, that honourable and holy Condition, in which he stood during his Continuance in a State of Innocence: And that by virtue of the righteous Constitution of the *Covenant of Works*, through *Adam's Disobedience and Apostacy*, there is not one of his Race but is born with a guilty and depraved Nature, under an *Attainder* for the highest and most aggravated *Treason* that a human Creature could commit.

Thus

Thus every Man, as soon as he is born, stands *justly condemned* by the righteous *Law* of God to a perpetual Banishment from all Good; and by Reason of his *original* and *actual Sin*, according to the holy Sanction of *that Law*, is marked out for the *Vengeance of Heaven*; which, if it fall upon him, will make him most exquisitely *miserable* both in Soul and Body to an endless Eternity.

THUS, Sir, you are to endeavour to *awaken Sinners*, and to rouse them, by apprizing them of *their Guilt* and *Danger*, and pointing out their absolute *Need of a Saviour*.

BUT withal let them know, that though *they have destroyed themselves*, (q) yet there is *Help laid upon one that is mighty*, (r) even JESUS the Son of God; and that through his Mediation, and the Imputation of his Righteousness, there is a *Way opened* for the effectual and certain *Recovery of all the Elect*, though they have been among the very *chief of Sinners*, into a State of *Justification* and Acceptance with GOD:—And that through the SPIRIT'S Application of the Grace which CHRIST has purchased, they shall be brought into a State of friendly *Communion*, of a spiritual and holy, of an intimate and delightful
Fellowship

(q) Hof. xiii. ix.

(r) Psal. lxxxix. 19.

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Fellowship with GOD here, and into a full Enjoyment of His immediate and blissful Presence in the State and World above:

— And on the whole, that this *perfect Felicity* shall certainly be the Privilege of *all the chosen and redeemed of the LORD*; of all those, who *thro' the Working of the mighty Power of the Holy Ghost* are quickened to a sincere and evangelical *Repentance toward GOD*, thro' an unfeigned *Faith in the LORD JESUS CHRIST*; but not of any others.

ANOTHER grand Point, absolutely necessary to be insisted upon, is,

3. THAT the *whole of Salvation*, from the Beginning to the End of it, is *entirely of Grace*.

LET me beseech you therefore to be very free, explicit, and open in declaring, that *Salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of GOD that sheweth Mercy (s)*. In your preaching make it evident, according to *the Word of the Truth of the Gospel*, that the FATHER's eternal *Election*, the SON's glorious *Redemption*, and the SPIRIT's effectual *Application* of the Benefits of that Redemption, are all of rich, free, discriminating, and

(s) Rom. ix. 16.

and sovereign *Grace* : — And that whoever are *saved and called with an holy Calling*, it is *not according to any Works of Righteousness which they have done, but according to the Purpose, Mercy, and Grace of GOD in CHRIST JESUS (t)*. — And that, as our being *called into the Fellowship of the Son of GOD*, so our *Justification unto Life*, our spiritual *Adoption*, the inward *Purification of our Hearts*, and the universal *Sanctification of the whole Man*, together with our *Confirmation, Establishment, and Perseverance in a State of Holiness*, are *all of them the Blessings and Fruits of Grace*.

ENDEAVOUR thus to assure Men, that never were any Sinners collected and laid *as living Stones in GOD's spiritual Building (u)*, but they have the strongest Reason, and will certainly be disposed to the last, *to shout with the loudest Acclamations, Grace, Grace (w)*; making the most humble and thankful Acknowledgment, that from first to last *Grace* was shewn unto them, unto each one of them in particular, or they themselves had not been saved.

AN open and steady Declaration of these Things is an essential Part of *your Business*,

(t) Comp. 2 Tim. i. 9. and Tit. iii. 5. (u) 1 Pet. ii. 5.
(w) Zech. iv. 7.

Sir, as you are *a Steward of the Mysteries of GOD*. But again,

4. LET me also injoin you to press *the absolute Necessity* of true *Holiness*, without which there can be *no Happiness*.

LET this be inculcated, and made to appear, thro' the whole of your Ministry. And while you plead for *the Necessity* of it, be bold to assert, upon the Divine Warrant of the *Scriptures*, and agreeably to the *Experience* of all truly converted Persons, that there must be *a new Birth, a new Creation*, before any of *Adam's Offspring* can *walk in Newness of Life*, or perform *Works* that are spiritually *good or holy* in the Sight of GOD.

DECLARE plainly, that as the *Faith* which does not *work by Love*, is a *dead Faith*, so the *Works* which do not *spring from Faith in CHRIST*, are *dead Works*; and that Persons must indeed be *dead to the Law* as 'tis a Covenant for Life, and *be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the Dead*, before they can *bring forth Fruit unto GOD* (x), or do any Thing acceptably unto Him.

BUT to close this Part of my Advice, as to the *Doctrines* to be more especially insisted on, let me add,

(x) Rom. vii. 4.

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5. THAT it is very necessary you should teach, that where GOD has *begun the good Work of Grace, He will perform it until the Day of JESUS CHRIST*(y).

NEVER be afraid nor ashamed to declare, even in the very Face of those that dare to deny the Doctrine of *Perseverance*, that CHRIST *having loved His own, will love them unto the End* (z); and that whoever are *effectually called* by Grace, they shall be *kept by the Power of GOD thro' Faith unto Salvation* (a). For the living GOD who is faithful and *stedfast for ever* (b), has engaged to his People, that He *will never leave them, nor forsake them* (c): so that none of those, who have *his Covenant Fear put into their Hearts*, shall be left utterly to *depart from Him* (d).

YEA you are to encourage Believers to expect with the highest Confidence, that their *Captain of Salvation*, being also a *compassionate High Priest*, will sympathize with them *in all their Afflictions*. He that *in His Love and Pity has redeemed them*, will *bear them* and support them under their Trials, and *carry them safe thro' all their Difficulties*, as He did His *Israel in*

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(y) Phil. i. 6. (z) John xiii. 1. (a) 1 Pet. i. 5.
 (b) Dan. vi. 26. (c) Heb. xiii. 5. (d) Jer. xxxii. 40.

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the Days of old (e). Comfort the Saints by assuring them, that *all Things* are *working together for their Good (f)*, and shall certainly issue well at last. He that loves them, will *put underneath them everlasting Arms*, and according to *their Day, their Strength shall be (g)*. His *Grace* shall be *sufficient for them*, and they shall be made *more than Conquerors* over Sin, Death, and Hell. For *their Life being hid with CHRIST in GOD*, when *CHRIST who is their Life shall appear*, then shall they also appear with Him in *Glory (h)*.

THESE THINGS you are to *teach and exhort*. And as I would strictly charge it upon my own Soul, that *I do not*, so I am now bound humbly and solemnly to charge you, *Brother*, in the Sight of GOD, and in the Name of CHRIST, as you shall answer it at the great Day, that *you do not teach any other Doctrine*, that would be contrary unto, or inconsistent with them. For the Points I have mention'd, and those which stand in a close Connection with them, being *the Doctrines that were taught by CHRIST and his holy Apostles and Prophets*, they must needs be *wholesome Truths*, and the only *Doctrine which is according to Godli-*

(e) Isai. lxiii. 9.

(f) Rom. viii. 28.

(g) Deut. xxxiii. 25, 27.

(h) Col. iii. 3, 4.

Godliness (i). Let These therefore be the prevailing and reigning Subjects in your Discourses.

BUT besides the *Publication* of the *Doctrine* of CHRIST, there is another very necessary Part of the *Work* which you are to perform as a *Steward of the Mysteries of GOD*: And this lies in the faithful *Administration* of the solemn *Ordinances* of special Communion, viz. *Baptism*, and the *Lord's-Supper*.

THESE are justly esteemed Part of the *Mysteries of GOD*. And it would, I apprehend, be easy to shew, that there is a *Mystery* in them. For by the external *Washing with Water* in *Baptism*, is signified, represented, and sealed, the Truth of what is doctrinally taught in the Word of GOD, concerning the Believer's being *washed from his Sins (k) in the Blood of CHRIST*, and his being *renewed by the Holy Ghost* thro' the internal *Washing of Regeneration (l)*.

AND with Regard to the *Lord's-Supper*, there is a *Mystery* in that also, too great to be rightly understood by any but true Believers. That the *Cup of Blessing* which is *blessed* in this Ordinance, should be spiritually and truly the *Communion of the Blood*

(i) 1 Tim. iv. 3. (k) Acts xxii. 16. (l) Tit. iii. 5.

Blood of CHRIST, and that *the Bread* which is *broken* and *received* according to Divine Appointment, should be *the Communion of the Body of CHRIST (m)*, is a *Secret*, that cannot be experimentally or savingly known by any other, but by *Believers* only: Neither can they themselves at present fully comprehend it, but readily acknowledge, that even while they have the real Experience of this Privilege, it still remains unto them *a great Mystery*.

As then you are obliged to *continue stedfast* in preaching *the Doctrine of the Apostles (n)*, so also you are bound to administer *these Ordinances*, which they *received of the Lord*, and which He has appointed to be *administred* by the *Pastors of Churches*, and by them solely, in all Ages from Time to Time, as Opportunity shall offer and Occasion require.

FURTHER, You are not only to *feed the Flock of GOD*, but to *take the Oversight thereof (o)*; exercising a most diligent Inspection and *Watchfulness*, that there may not at any Time, thro' a Neglect on your Part, be in this Church, or any of its Members, a Defection from the Truth, a Decay in vital Holiness, or a Sinking into *a Formality in Religion*, which will certainly

(m) 1 Cor. x. 16. (n) Acts ii. 42. (o) 1 Pet. v. 2.

tainly leave *Professors* exceedingly and most dangerously liable to fall into a *Conformity to the World*, and quickly lead them into a *sinful Compliance* at least with the *Vanities*, if not at length into the *Practice* of the more gross *Abominations* and Vices of the Times.

You are constantly to *watch* therefore, that you may see, what Occasion there shall be for serious Advice and Counsel, for solemn *Warnings*, Christian *Admonitions*, or ministerial *Reproofs*; and what Necessity for you to *double your Guard*, that there may never be any Thing *amiss in your Example*, to be either a *Stumbling-block* or *Snare* to others.

THERE is still another Part of the *Steward's Work*, of great Importance, and very necessary; which is to *visit the Sick*, especially such as desire and call for your Assistance.

THIS it must be allowed is a very *difficult Service*, and cannot be rightly perform'd without special and remarkable Help from above.

To treat those who have *in themselves the Sentence of Death*, and are as to our Apprehensions just upon the very Brink of Eternity, with that *Tenderness*, *Sympathy* and *Compassion*, and yet with that *Closetness*,

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ness, Faithfulness and Pungency, that may be necessary, you will find, *Brother*, to be *no easy Matter*, while you are sincerely careful, neither to *flatter* presumptuous and false Hopes on the one Hand, nor to *discourage* a weak and trembling Faith on the other.

YET since *the Sick* are expressly enjoined to *call for the Elders of the Church* in particular to *pray with them*, (*p*) from this Command we may infer, that it is *the Elders Duty* to comply with their Request. Be you therefore ever willing and ready to answer all providential Calls to such Service. Depend upon the LORD to help you to *speak a Word in Season* on such solemn and difficult Occasions; *praying*, that through *His Blessing* upon *these Visits*, Souls may be awakened, instructed and quickned, supported, established and comforted, and you yourself rendered more fit for your *Work and Duty*, both as a Christian, and a Minister.

I SHALL here add nothing farther as to *the Business* itself, which belongs to your *Office*; but proceed to the last Part of the Advice proposed, and beg of you to consider,

III. THE

(*p*) Jam. v. 14.

III. The *Faithfulness* required in those that bear this Character.

THIS *Faithfulness* might be distinctly set forth in various Particulars, which may be comprehended under three Heads.

THESE *Stewards* are to be *faithful*, with Regard, — to *the Principles* by which they are actuated, — to *the Manner* in which their Work is performed, — and to *the End* they aim at in all their Service.

LET me therefore press you, *my Brother*, to look well,

I. To *the Principles* by which you are actuated.

SEE that you act in every Part of your Work, from a *Reverence* of the great GOD, from a settled Apprehension of his Majesty, Supremacy, and Glory, and from a deep Conviction that He has an absolute Right to be *the sole Object* of our Worship, of the Fear, Love, and Obedience, of the Dependence, Delight, and Submission, of every Man upon the Face of the Earth.

AND that you may be *faithful* in instructing others, endeavour to be firmly and constantly perswaded in yourself, that there is *no Possibility* of any Sinner's at-

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taining to a comfortable or saving *Knowledge of GOD* in any other Way, but in and through a *believing Acquaintance* with the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is *come a Light into the World* (q); that *He only is the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; and that *no Man can come unto the Father with Safety, Peace, or Joy, but by Him.* (r)

LET it be deeply settled likewise as a *Principle* in your own Soul, that a Man can *never be justified by the Deeds of the Law*, (s) but only *by the Righteousness of Christ*, imputed to him, and received by Faith alone: As also, that a Man can *never worship GOD in Spirit and in Truth*, unless he be *born of the Spirit*; (t) nor *mortify the Deeds of the Body* that he may *live*, unless he has *the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him*: (u) And that whatever his own Abilities may be, a Man can *never obtain a Victory* over his spiritual *Enemies*, unless he has CHRIST to be *the Captain of his Salvation*, and thus be made *strong in the LORD, and in the Power of His Might.* (w)

MOREOVER, let it be impressed upon your Mind, that you can never be *faithful*, unless you have an inward, hearty, and real *Hatred*, a fixed and abiding Abhorrence, of *all Sin*; and this arising from
a sincere

(q) John xii. 46.

(r) John xiv. 6.

(s) Rom. iii. 20.

(t) John iv. 24.

(u) Rom. viii. 13.

(w) Eph. vi. 10.

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a sincere Love to GOD, and a grateful Sense of the inexpressible, inconceivable Kindness of CHRIST, in redeeming and saving lost Sinners.

NOR can you be *faithful*, unless you have *an holy Dread*, lest the *Kingdom of Satan*, and the *Dominion of Sin*, should any farther, or any longer *prevail* in yourself or others; with an *earnest Desire*, that such as are now *lying in Wickedness*, may be brought out of the *Bondage of Sin* and cruel *Vassalage of the Devil*, into a State of *Grace and Holiness*, and into the happy *spiritual Liberty*, which the Gospel proclaims, and CHRIST gives.

BE assured, Sir, that unless such Sentiments and Convictions, such Desires and Principles as these, be inlaid, yea deeply rooted, and continually strengthened, in your own Soul, you can never be *faithful* in dispensing to others *the Mysteries of God* with which you are intrusted as *His Steward*. For without Doubt, that *Divine Maxim* of our LORD may justly be applied to *Ministers* equally with others, which teaches us, that whether their Principles be good or bad, *Out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth will speak* (x).

AGAIN, if you would be *faithful*, you must look well,

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(x) Matt. xii. 34.

2. To the Manner in which your Work is performed.

LET the whole of it be discharged with *Affiduity*, Labour, and Care. Bring no raw, unstudied, or *indigested Thoughts* into the Pulpit, no trifling Notions, or needless Disputes; nor any Thing, but what has a direct Tendency to advance God's Glory, and to promote the People's Edification.

SEE to it, that what you *preach* be not only *Truth*, but *the Truth as it is in Jesus*. (y) Beware of treating *the Gospel*, as if it were no more than a *Republication* of the *Law of Nature*, or of the *Covenant of Works*. Make it evident, that whatever others do, you dare not place the good Sense, the fine Reasoning, or the religious Sentiments of any *Human Writers*, whether among *Pagans* or *Christians*, among *Papists* or *Protestants*, upon a Level with the infinite Wisdom and supreme Authority of JESUS CHRIST, the great and sole *Prophet* of the *Catholic Church*. In all Spiritual and Divine Things, let *His Word* be your Oracle.

YEA moreover, Be studiously careful, that what you shall at any Time deliver in your *Sermons* be not only *an evangelical Truth*,

(y) Eph. iv. 21.

Truth, but *the very Truth* that is taught *in the Text* you are upon, or such as may justly be inferred from it, or has a strict and pertinent Connection with it. And in publishing any *Truth of the Gospel*, shew that it is not a Matter of *bare Speculation*, but what Men are bound to receive with *Reverence* and *Love*, because it is the *Principle* and *Nourishment* of *spiritual Life*, and will be *the Savour of Death unto Death*, if it be not *the Savour of Life unto Life*; (z) and that it can never have any *suitable Effect*, unless it raises in us a thankful *Admiration of the Grace of GOD in Christ*, and engages a fiducial *Trust* and *Confidence* in Him; unless it fills us with *self-abasing Thoughts*, and puts us upon the earnest *Study* and *Practice* of real and *universal Holiness*, in all *religious Duties* towards GOD, as also in *Self-government*, and in those *Acts of Righteousness* and *Benevolence* which are due from us to any of our *Fellow-Creatures*.

FURTHER, study *the Method* as well as *the Matter* of your Discourses; and have a due *Regard* even to *your Language*. Let it be *plain*, yet *grave* and *decent*. Shun all *Affectation* of a pompous *Style*; and upon every Subject *chuse such Terms* as are *suitable*, *just* and *proper*, such as are most
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(z) 2 Cor. ii. 16.

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likely to be instructive, striking and pungent. Do not press *Metaphors* or *Parables* too far; and whensoever they are introduced, follow *Nature*, but never force it. And above all, *speak* as much as may be in the *Language of Scripture*, and study to express yourself, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* (a) Be always careful, that your *Expressions* may be clear, very perspicuous and easy to be understood. Be vigilant to use *all pertinent, just, and necessary Distinctions*, that you may *shew an Uncorruptness in Doctrine*, and may approve yourself to be a *Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* (b) On the whole, make it manifest, that while in your *Preaching* you endeavour to *speaking to the Profit and Improvement of those who have the highest Attainments in Knowledge and Grace*, you are willing to *condescend to those who are of the lowest and meanest Capacities in the Assembly.*

WHEN there is a necessary Occasion for your touching upon any *Matter of Controversy*, use the greatest *Plainness, Frankness, and Openness*, in *discovering your own Sentiments*, without any artful *Ambiguity* or *cunning Craftiness*, to dissemble or conceal your *Judgment.*

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(a) 1 Cor. ii. 13.

(b) 2 Tim. ii. 15.

BE bold and *couragious* in your Master's Work; and never *daub with untemper'd Mortar* (c). Be *valiant for the Truth* (d), and never flinch from it; but being meek and *patient towards all Men* (e), *set your Face as a Flint* (f) against all Opposition, without being *dismay'd at the Looks* of any that withstand the Gospel. Remember, that *Ministers* above all others are bound to *confess CHRIST*, and *not to be ashamed of Him and His Words before Men* (g): Be not discouraged then from *publishing* any of *the Mysteries of Divine Revelation*, however *the Deists, Infidels, or Free-thinkers* of the Age, may brand *the deep Things of GOD*, as Points *too abstruse* to be brought into a Pulpit, or to be made the Subject of a Minister's publick Discourses.

BE careful too, and ever ready to inculcate in your *private Conversation*, the heavenly and spiritual Things you deliver in your *Sermons*. Thus make it your Practice to preach *from House to House* (h): And let it appear in all your Behaviour, that *the Truths* you publish are not only *suited*, but have a powerful Influence, to *purify the Heart*, to regulate *the Temper*, and to promote *all holy Conversation and Godliness*.

(c) Ezek. xiii. 10. (d) Jer. ix. 3. (e) 1 Thess. v. 14.

(f) Isai. l. 7. (g) Matt. x. 32. and Mark viii. 38.

(h) Acts xx. 20.

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Godliness. And oh happy sure it will be for All those *Embassadors of CHRIST*, who, like *Moses* the Servant of the LORD, carry *their Credentials* in *their Face*, or in their very outward Appearance; tho' not in the *Shining* of their *bodily Countenance*, yet in the bright Lustre of their regular and heavenly *Walk*, of their humble and beautiful *Behaviour* before all the People.

IN every Part of your Work therefore, be *clothed with Humility* (i). After your highest Attainments openly and heartily acknowledge with the Apostle, *By the Grace of GOD I am what I am*; and after your most *abundant Labours*, and any Instances of *Success* therein, with which the LORD shall at any Time be pleased to favour you, assume *nothing to yourself*, but ascribe *all to the Grace of GOD which is with you*. And under a deep Sense of your own Weakness and *Insufficiency* even so much as *to think a good Thought* (k), be much in *Prayer* to the LORD, that *great Grace* may be *upon you* (l); that being constantly assisted in *searching the Scriptures*, you may *have the Mind of Christ* (m), and then be help'd to *speak* with that Reverence and Solemnity, with that Earnestness, and yet with that tender Compassion, Sympathy,

(i) 1 Pet. v. 5.

(l) Acts iv. 33.

(k) 2 Cor. iii. 5.

(m) 1 Cor. ii. 16.

Sympathy, and Sweetness of Affection, as may be most likely to *engage the Attention*, and thro' the Blessing of the LORD to *melt the very Hearts* of the Hearers.

HAVING said thus much as to *the Manner* in which your Work is to be performed, I shall now draw to a Conclusion by pressing you to look well,

3. To *the End* you aim at in all your *Ministry*.

As you are to *serve GOD with your Spirit in the Gospel of His Son (n)*, so in all your Work you are to have *a single Eye* to His Glory.

AIM therefore that *your Preaching* may be ever *well adapted* to shew, that as each of the *Divine Attributes* is display'd, vindicated, and exalted, so the Name of each of the *Divine Persons*, FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, is most highly extolled and magnified, in that mysterious and surprizing *Way of Salvation* which the Scriptures reveal.

BE careful, and *cry earnestly* unto GOD *for Help*, that there may be just Reason for its being said of *you*, as it was of *Gaius*, that *he did faithfully whatsoever he did to the Brethren, and to Strangers: (o)* Thus let

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all

(n) Rom. i. 9.

(o) 3 John, ver. 5.

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all your Works be *done faithfully* to the Glory of GOD.

WATCH against all *sinister* and *worldly Views*. Do nothing for *filthy Lucre*, or to gain *the Applause of Men*. In this Respect be *dead to Character* : But keep an upright and steady Aim at *doing Good to Souls* ; that the *Jerusalem* of GOD may be *built up*, and His *Zion* flourish ; that *this Church of CHRIST*, which not long since, (especially under the Pastoral Care of the late Reverend and excellent Mr. *Bragge*,) was one of the most flourishing and renown'd Churches in this City, or perhaps throughout the Nation, may *not be forgotten or forsaken* ; but that *their Days may be renewed as of old*(p), when there were not only frequent and *numerous Admissions*, but a holy, circumspect, and *exemplary Walk* was to be visibly seen *in its Members*, with a fervent and becoming *Zeal* for the *Purity*, both of the *Doctrine, Worship, and Order* of the Gospel.

THAT you, *Brother*, may see the Return of such desirable Days, let a *Revival* of the Work of GOD *every where*, but among *this People* in particular, be your great Concern. And with this View be careful, to *preach, not yourself, but CHRIST JESUS the Lord* (q) ; and *determine to know*

(p) Lam. v. 21.

(q) 2 Cor. iv. 5.

know nothing among the People, save JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified (r).

BE fervent also in your *daily Cries* to the LORD, and beseech *the Brethren* to *pray for you (s)*, that you may be directed in the *Choice of your Subjects*, and assisted in the proper Way of *handling them*; that thro' the Divine Blessing upon your Ministry, *Sinners* may be converted, the number of *Believers* be greatly increased, and the *Saints* truly edified; and that thus, in the Hand of the SPIRIT of GOD, you may be an Instrument of instructing the Ignorant, awakening the Secure, abasing the Proud, and reforming the Obstinate and Impenitent; yea the happy Instrument of *wining many Souls* to CHRIST, and of *building up the Saints* in Faith, Holiness and Comfort.

LET the *Design of your Commission* be ever kept in View. And what is *this*? but that you should be constantly prosecuting *the same grand Design* upon which *our Lord himself* came into the World; which was, that by the Virtue of His Death, and the Power of His Grace, *Sin* might be *taken away (t)*, the *Head of the Serpent* be *bruised (u)*, and the *Works of the Devil* *destroyed (w)*; that the *Image of CHRIST*

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might

(r) 1 Cor. ii. 2. (s) 1 Theff. v. 25. (t) 1 John iii. 5.
(u) Gen. iii. 15. (w) 1 John iii. 8.

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might be *formed* in the Hearts of Men, and the *Sheep* and *Lambs* of His Flock be *fed* with the heavenly and spiritual *Manna*, and thus be *nourished* in their Souls, till they shall grow up into a *Meetness* to be *Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light* (x)

FINALLY, *my dear Brother*, Be very solicitous, that in a Subserviency to the Glory of God your Ministry may be truly a Blessing to this Church ; and that all your *faithful* Labours in the Gospel may be very *successful* ; that you may have many to be your *Joy*, and *Crown of Rejoycing*, in the *Presence of the LORD at his coming*. (y) And to this and every other necessary End and saving Purpose, *may the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with your Spirit*. AMEN.

(x) Col. i. 12.

(y) 1 Theff. ii. 19.



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